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DER ENTWICKELUNGSGEDANKE IN DER EVANGELISCHEN THEOLOGIE BIS SCHLEIERMACHER. Von FRIEDRICH SCHIELE; *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, VII, Heft 2.

THE term "development" was first used by Nicolaus de Cusa in the sense of explication or evolution. Leibnitz, in his doctrine of monads, used it of the unfolding of the soul's essence, and since this consists of ideas, development with him means enlightenment. Lessing, in his *Education of the Human Race*, made the successive steps of revelation the process by which the self-developing understanding arrives at clearness of ideas. Semler, the father of the enlightenment theology, applied Leibnitz' idea of gradual development to the Christian revelation. Scripture statements, being locally and temporally conditioned, can be no register of all religious knowledge for all time, but only a beginning. Like the early Christian apologists, he disregarded the historical elements of Christianity; dogmas based upon them might be of value for the "public" (*öffentlichen*) religion of the masses, but these and the dogmas which flow from speculative-mystical thought are foreign to the "private" (*eigenen*) religion of the educated and enlightened, which is founded on the rational teachings of a natural theology.

Abraham Teller attempted a broad and connected application of Leibnitz' idea to religion. Of this, he said, there are three grades of development: first, the Christianity of faith, resting on the authority of a teacher and employing history, figures, and parables; second, the Christianity of reason, which passes from facts to principles, from reliance on another's system to the erection of one's own; third, the religion of the perfect, springing out of truth immediately perceived. Men commence with the first and end with the third, not in every case passing through the second.

The Enlightenment, like the Hellenistic Gnosis, failed to inquire what "faith" means, and neutralized it by "knowledge." Akin to deism of the better type, it yet made no attempt to get back to nature by rejecting the supposed accretions of history, for the "religion of the perfect" issued out of a historical process.

Both education and development were comprehended in Krug's "perfectibility," which he defined to be "that quality of revealed religion by virtue of which it contains the principle (*i. e.*, the determinate possibility) of a constant development and progress." Christianity needs perfecting, not only subjectively by appropriation, but objectively by doctrinal transformation and correction; yet without

removing its foundation in God, freedom, and immortality. But this "principle" is only formal, and makes out nothing as to the *content* of Christianity.

Kant shattered the theoretical structure of the Enlightenment, but with it acknowledged the primacy of reason in the practical sphere. Religion is to be freed from all empirical grounds and externalities, and a religion of reason is to take their place. Revelation is the free unfolding of inherent divine qualities from a self-developing germ in man (*cf.* E. Caird's "germinative principle"); but he does not state *what this religion of reason is*, nor define the *aim* of the development. Christ is indeed to Kant the "personified idea of the good principle," but *how*?

Important among Kantians is Ammon, because his treatment of religion was historical. But with him the development of Christianity to a world-religion is a development only in the form and mode of teaching, not an evolution of the religion itself in its inner essence. Rohr, the rationalist, said Jesus aimed at a universal religion; therefore its universal system of religious truth must have its final ground in universal human reason. That is, the religion of Jesus = rationalism, and has no connection with a doctrine of his person.

Rationalism lacked the feeling for history, and, accordingly, it viewed Christianity one-sidedly as doctrine. The so-called development was rather an *envelopment* of Christianity out of supposed wrappings. It was regress, not progress. But when the new speculative philosophy and theology of the nineteenth century began to apply the notion of development to the various speculative dogmas, the historical sense was awakened. Herder saw that a religion of pure reason (or natural theology) has not been from the first everywhere the same. Revelation is not given to men as a ready-made idea; but it is the feeling for the invisible in the visible, for the one in the many; it is the universal spirit adjusted to the real in nature and history. Schelling, in his philosophy of identity, viewed spirit as invisible nature and nature as visible spirit. The self-revelation is a historical process. Christianity is "the eternal idea," "the ideal spirit," ever disrobing itself of its old forms of manifestation and clothing itself anew. This "ideal principle" is of the very essence of Christianity, and not a mere capacity for becoming, like Krug's "perfectibility." The rationalists sought to return to the doctrine of Jesus; Schelling advocated the progressive evolution of religion. Hegel described the essence of religion as the exaltation of the finite nature-bound spirit to its freedom

in God, and sought to find in every religion a moment in the development of the *idea* of religion, but in a purely logical way.

The error common to both speculative and rationalistic thought was the assumption that Christianity is essentially doctrine, revelation a communication or acquisition of knowledges, and its content objective theoretical *Weltanschauung* rather than subjective spiritual life-determination. This error was overcome *practically* by the Reformers and *theoretically* by Schleiermacher. With him religion has an independent basis as a distinct inner quality of the human spirit—namely, feeling (*Gemüth, Gefühl*), and it is, therefore, not interchangeable with doctrine or morality. The essence of Christianity is not to be found in a faith in facts of history, nor in a principle of reason dialectically disclosed, but in *the absolutely archetypal person of Jesus Christ*—not his empirical appearing, but *the peculiar determinateness of his God-consciousness*. This is the eternal infinite principle of Christianity, which exists perfectly in Christ, but did not come to perfect manifestation in his empirical life.

A very concise, clear summary, written from the Ritschlian point of view.

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DIE WAHRE BEDEUTUNG DER GLAUBENSRECHTFERTIGUNG. VON DR. ZITZLAFF, Superintendent in Fehrbellin; *Studien und Kritiken*, 1897, pp. 489-577.

THE Catholic church holds that in connection with justification there is a change in the believer's character; and that this change is effected by the believer himself, under the influence of divine grace. Justification and sanctification are simultaneous and identical, and both alike depend upon human coöperation.

The Evangelical Lutheran church holds that justification is an act of pure grace on God's part, for the sake of the righteousness of Christ, and without the coöperation of men.

In their zeal to guard against the error of the Catholics in making faith meritorious, some of the theologians of the church, following the Formula of Concord, were led to declare that justification is a forensic act, a declaration of pardon merely, a matter of God's judgment simply, not affecting in any way the believer's character. *Quæ actio, cum sit extra hominem non potest hominem intrinsece mutare* (Hollaz).